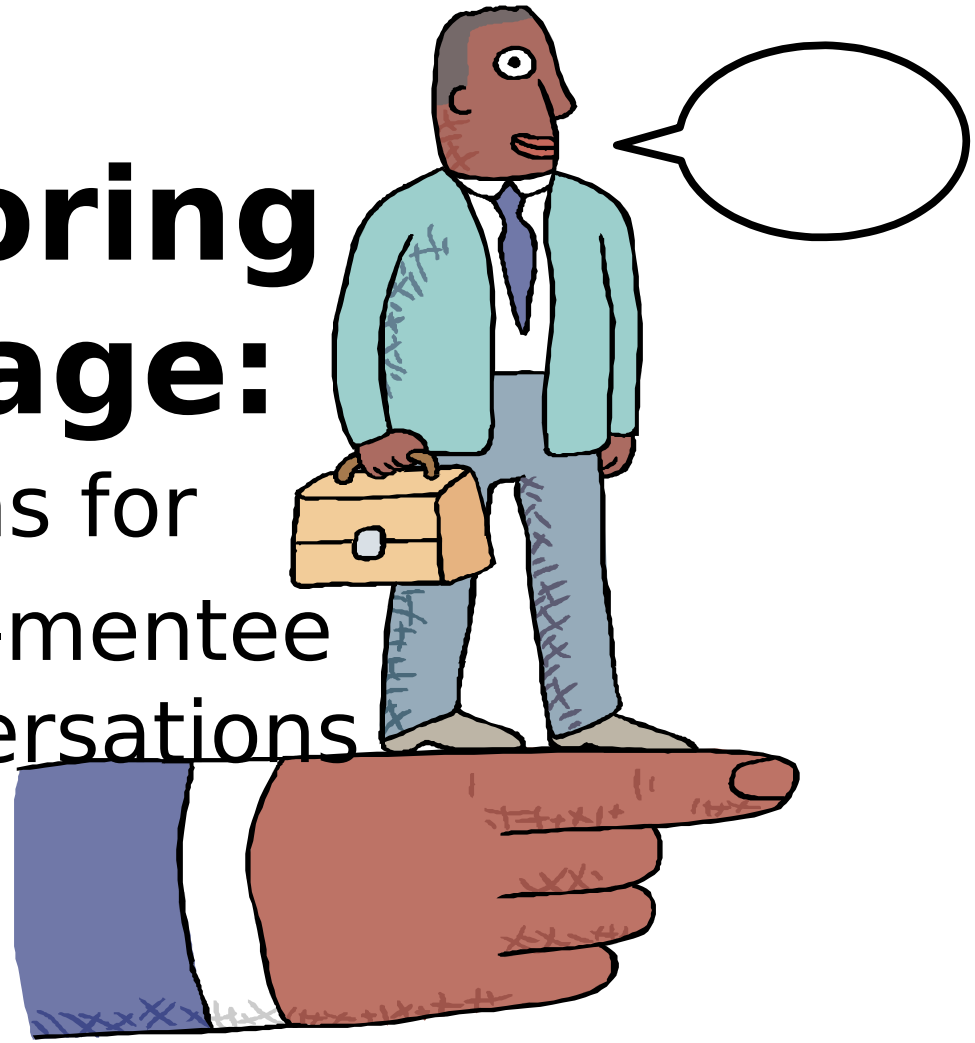
Mentoring Language:

Useful questions for mentor-mentee conversations



Establishing a mentoring relationship via conversations

the ideal mentoring relationship is not necessarily based on giving and following advice, but rather on **exploring a range of topics together**.

- Questions can encourage the mentee to
  - reflect on experiences,
  - ask questions about the laboratory and his/her professional choices, and
  - to see the mentor as a trusted guide.

Getting acquainted

- How are things going?
- What are your goals?
- Where have you worked before?
- What was your previous research about?
- How does your previous research connect to what you are doing now?

Problem Identification

- What results have you achieved so far?
- Where are you stuck?
- Why do you think that happened?
- Can this problem or type of problem be avoided in the future? If yes, how? If no, why not?

Problem-Solving

- What do you think about this idea?
- What do you think is important?
- Why is this approach going to work?
- What do you see as the obstacles we face?
- Is there anything sidetracking you from solving the problem?

Options and Solutions

- What solutions have you attempted?
- What do you see as your options?
- Do you want input or suggestions from me?
- Do you want help finding an expert in Xyz her at the lab or outside the lab?

Support

- What can I do to support you in this?
- Whose support do you need?
- Would it be helpful to talk about this again?

***Sources for this document*:**

- Faculty Mentoring Resources at UW Oshkosh
  - www.uwosh.edu/mentoring
- Faculty Mentoring Resources at Kent University
  - http://www.kent.edu/regional/faculty/upload/GuidelinesforEffectiveM